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Challenges of Manuscript Descriptions
in the Modern Libraries' Information Landscape

Content and Objectives of the Lecture and Group Work on the Lecture Topic:

The lecture intends to give an overview of the kinds of existing (mostly traditional) manuscript descriptions (with some examples) and possibilities to make best use of them in a database and on the internet. For this some databases (both generic mss databases and union catalogue systems) will be analysed in their contents and structures. The possibilities of interlinking of records, portals, the use of authority files and finally semantic web structures will be presented. Some particular issues of mss cataloguing will be considered (e.g. authorship, text and illumination, research surveys). Some databases for particular features of the mss such as ones on bindings, watermarks, etc. will be presented to discuss how they can be integrated. The lecture will focus on codex descriptions – but the challenges of archival material and its particular structures will at least be touched upon.

Objectives are to give awareness of the possibilities to integrate existing material into the modern internet architectures and to present descriptions on different levels to different audiences.

Assignment:

For an assignment to this topic the student should have a good understanding of data structures. A survey about existing mss databases and the comparative discussion of their structures with a guideline for harmonization would be welcome.

Readings:

Pass, Gregory A.: Descriptive cataloging of ancient, medieval, Renaissance, and early modern manuscripts. Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, 2003

German manuscript cataloguing and the TEI-P5, 12. Juli 2006 – MASTER - Interface format for the description of medieval manuscripts. adaptation of the TEI guidelines P5 to the German cataloguing system ...
www.hab.de/bibliothek/wdb/master/.../06_MASTER.htm - Im Cache

Positionspapier der Handschriftenzentren: Katalogisierung, Digitalisierung, Präsentation / Claudia Fabian; Robert Giel; Christian Heitzmann; Christoph Mackert; Eef Overgaauw; Alessandra Sorbello-Staub; Bernhard Tönnies; Bettina Wagner. – In: Zeitschrift für Bibliothekswesen und Bibliographie 56,5 (2009), S. 281-286

Fabian, Claudia: Le catalogage des manuscrits médiévaux et de la Renaissance sur le réseau moderne informatique des bibliothèques : un apercu des expériences allemandes. In : Linking the worlds of script and print : catalogues of European manuscripts and early printed books. London : CERL 2009 (CERL Papers ; 9) , S. 1-15

or (German version, more or less:
Fabian, Claudia: Die Handschriftenerschließung im Wandel - modernste Methoden für ältestes Kulturgut. - In: Information, Innovation, Inspiration: 450 Jahre Bayerische Staatsbibliothek / hrsg. Von Rolf Griebel und Klaus Ceynowa. Redaktion: Klaus Haller. – München: Saur, 2008, S. 167- 190

(of both articles a copy can be provided)

Please have a look at some mss databases, like:
Manuscripta Mediaevalia, CERL Portal, Manuscriptorium, Kalliope, OAIster, Europeana, Europeana regia, E-codices (Switzerland), MANUS (Italy), etc.